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From Farm to Campus, RWU Celebrates Local Food Community with Annual Eat Local Challenge

Chefs prepare regionally authentic dishes featuring fresh produce, fish and meat exclusively sourced from New England farms and vendors



September 27, 2016 | Public Affairs Staff

BRISTOL, R.I. – With a bounty of delectable, fresh food growing at farms all around campus, Roger Williams University joins together today to celebrate the Annual Eat Local Challenge – a day on which the campus community comes together to sample local foods at the farmer’s market and feast on regionally authentic dishes in the dining commons, all to celebrate the importance of environmentally responsible food sourcing.

For this year’s Eat Local Challenge, the chefs will highlight Rhode Island’s best with dishes – grilled swordfish steaks, root vegetable stew with homemade cornbread, and grilled prosciutto and *queso fresco* pizza, among other items. The dining commons will also feature a chilled raw bar of Narragansett Bay littleneck clams, Onset oysters and scallop ceviche sourced from Cape Cod. Other specialty dishes will include potato leek soup, cheese ravioli and eggplant roulades with autumn squash and goat cheese. All of the ingredients are harvested within 150 miles of the campus.

The Eat Local Challenge is in its 12th year and was created when Bon Appétit launched its Farm to Fork program, in which all Bon Appétit chefs have been required to source at least 20 percent of their ingredients from small, owner-operated farms within that radius.

RWU is committed to sourcing a majority of its fresh ingredients from local farms, fisherman and artisans throughout the year. From eggs to potatoes and dairy, many food items come directly from farms in Rhode Island or Southern New England, including Little Rhody Farms in Foster and Rhody Fresh in Hope. Approximately 80 percent of the fresh seafood served on campus is exclusively sourced from New England waters and purchased fresh daily from The Foley Fish company in New Bedford; 90 percent of the bread on campus is made locally at Homestead Bakery in East Providence or Calise Bakery in Lincoln, among other local bakeries.

“The Eat Local Challenge is a celebration of sustainability, a time to pause and appreciate the food we love and where it comes from,” says Bon Appétit General Manager James Gubata. “It is a time when the bounty of the harvest is in full beauty and nature is generous.”

This year, the chefs will share tips on making the most of a “bumper crop” from a particularly fruitful plant – backyard gardeners are often familiar with the challenge of creating diverse dishes from the prolific zucchini. They’ll offer suggestions for recipes and how to store and preserve peak harvest bounty.

While sampling the fare the farmer’s market held inside the dining commons, the community will get a chance to meet some of the farmers growing their food from Horse Listeners Orchard, Foley Fish, Rhody Fresh and Aquidneck Honey.

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